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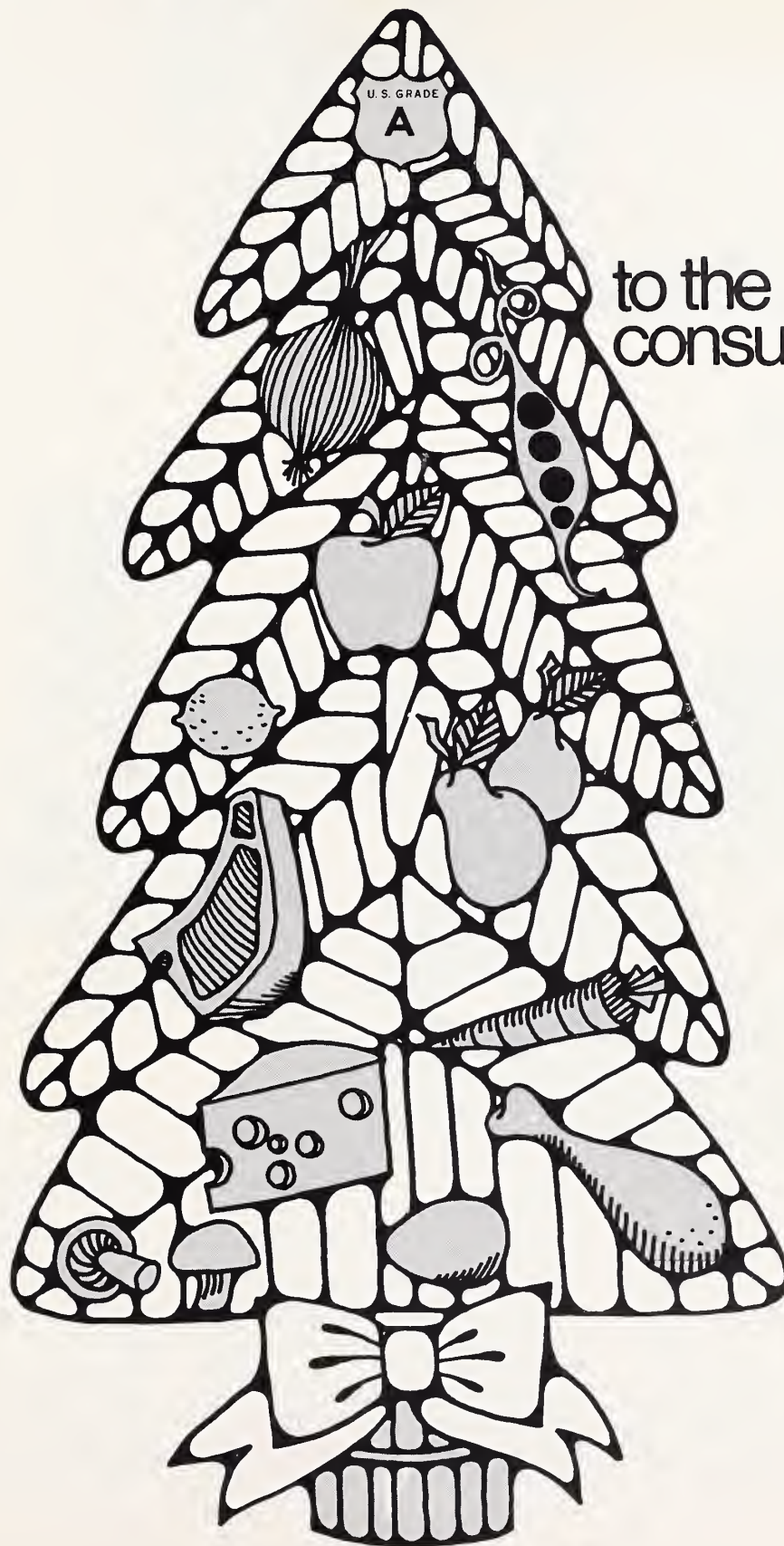
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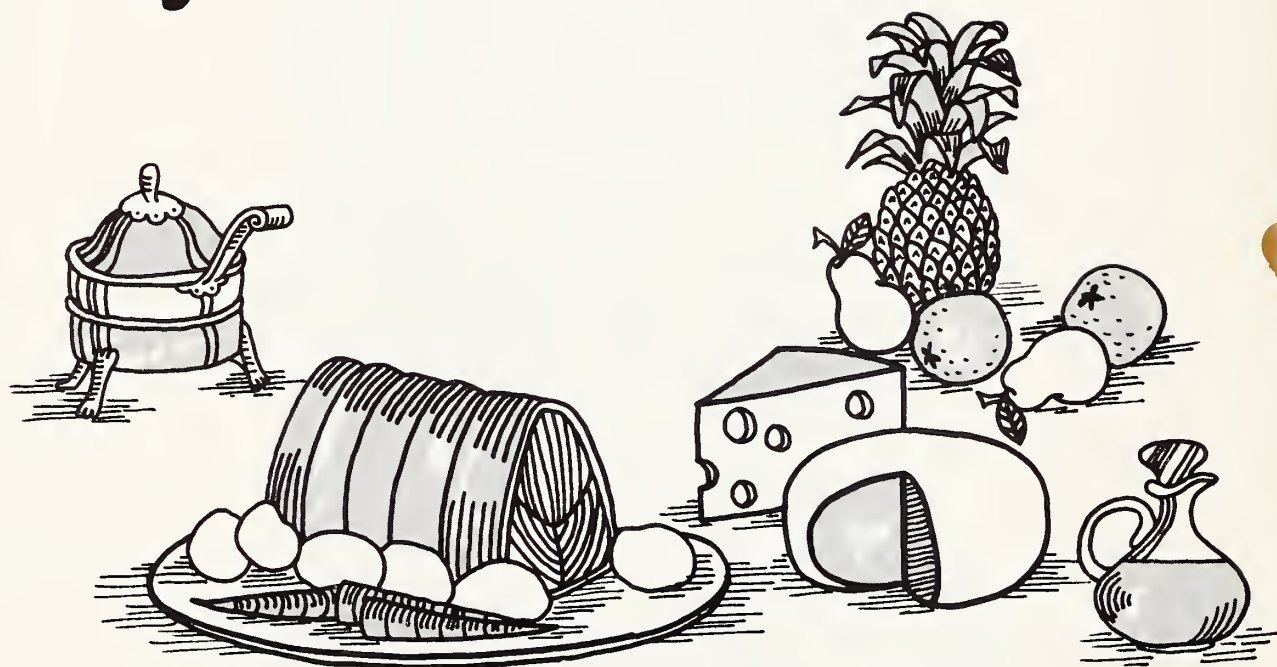
Betty C
DEC 1969



to the
consumer

HOLIDAY FARE

how to buy it



RECALL THIS SCENE? Visions of sugar plums danced in your head while a covey of cooks scurried around the kitchen preparing mounds of food for the holiday meal. The scene was generally the same from Maine to Texas, from Oregon to West Virginia. The only difference might have been in the selection of foods on the menu.

Same scene, add a few years. You have grown from a child with head full of dancing sugar plums to a full-fledged star of the kitchen.

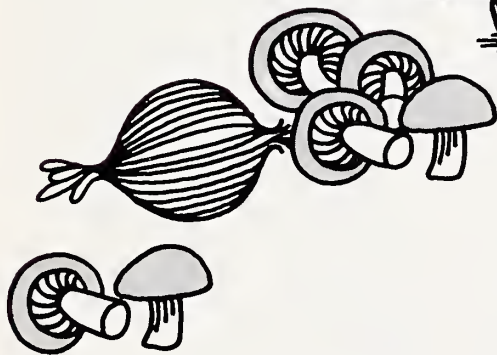
Half the fun of holiday meals for you, the cook, is planning and preparing the menu for family and friends. Should you fix a beef roast, a ham, or a turkey? Or how about some other entree?

Choice of entree is only one of the decisions you must make. What about vegetables? Mashed potatoes, sweetpotatoes, peas, fruit salad? How about trimmings? And dessert?

Personal tastes may vary, but every cook strives for one thing in holiday food—high quality.

Grades of quality established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture can help you buy the best for your family's holiday meal.

USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service has prepared a series of pamphlets that describe and explain the grades used for many foods. You can get nine of these easy-to-read, fact-filled publications in one handy packet, "How to Buy Food," for \$1.25 from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. □



Everyman's Pheasant

DOES THE WORD "PHEASANT" bring to your mind such delicacies as "pheasant under glass" — food fit solely for kings? Well, you probably enjoy the feast of kings during the holiday season because the turkey is a member of the pheasant family.

This particular pheasant is a native American. But it was not the New England colonists of first

Thanksgiving fame who discovered him. Spaniards came across the turkey, which had been domesticated by the Aztec Indians, when they explored Mexico in the early 1500s.

This same common "northern wild turkey" still exists today, but he has retreated to heavily wooded areas that are inaccessible to most men. This bird doesn't look much

like our holiday turkey. He is trim and agile, with golden bronze hues crowning his small head, and a blue-black sheen to his body feathers.

The Spanish explorers didn't feel the turkey's slim elegant form harmed his flavor, and they exported the delicious bird to Europe. There, the sweet meat of the wild bird gained quick acceptance, and he was

soon bred for food. As Englishmen migrated to North America, they brought with them newly developed breeds, so it was not just the native wild turkeys that the colonists ate.

But turkeys—wild or domesticated—were not in yesteryear what they are on your dining room table today. If the colonists chose a wild turkey for the holiday feast, they didn't have much time to check its quality as it neatly dodged through the forest. And even the domesticated turkeys had not been developed to the point of perfection that they have reached today. Today's new turkeys are deep and broad-breasted, with more white meat, and 50 percent more meat as a whole, than their colonial predecessors.

More important, today's housewife needn't fear that her husband won't be able to catch a wild bird for Christmas dinner. Instead, she merely walks to the neighboring supermarket and selects her bird from long rows of "ready-to-cook" turkeys. And unlike the colonists, she can make sure of getting top-quality meat. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service grades the majority of turkeys for quality, and these grades can help her choose.

Whatever the size of the turkey you may choose, look for the USDA Grade A shield of quality. You can

be sure that these birds are fully fleshed and meaty, with a good layer of fat to keep them tender and juicy while cooking. You can also be sure that your bird will look beautiful because USDA Grade A turkeys are free from most defects, such as bruises and torn skin.

Turkeys are put on the market at ages ranging from 16 weeks to more than 15 months. For that Christmas or holiday dinner, you will want special assurance that the bird will be tender after roasting. Young turkeys up to 7 months of age (such as fryer-roaster, young hen, or young tom) are best for this purpose as they are naturally tender and possess a sweet full flavor.

However, it is in stuffing the turkey that the housewife can really add her own signature to the feast. As well as the traditional bread stuffing, there are oyster, nut, or even cornbread stuffings which will give the turkey a gourmet touch.

Now, imagine the rich warm scent of a steaming hot turkey spilling its spicy stuffing out over your best platter—and the accompanying bowl of fragrant dark gravy. Add to this scene a small child, his face half obscured in a huge drumstick. Include the rest of the family, too, as they munch other parts of the golden bird. Everyman's pheasant—the perfect holiday dinner! □

More Potato Pancakes, Please

HANUKKAH—THE FEAST of Lights—is the gayest of all Jewish holidays and is traditionally celebrated at this time of year. The official food for this festive occasion is latkes—or pancakes made of grated raw potato.

There are several ways to make latkes. The most popular version, however, is the way "mama" used to make them—with potatoes, an onion, eggs, flour, baking powder, pepper, and salt. One of the secrets in making old-fashioned latkes is to peel and grate the potatoes and onion and to let them stand in a bowl for about ten minutes until the liquid rises to the top. You then remove the liquid before stirring in the other ingredients. Drop spoonfuls of the mixture

onto a hot skillet, brown the pancakes on both sides and drain on absorbent paper. As a final touch, serve the latkes hot with applesauce, sugar or sour cream.

A variation of mama's recipe is to add a half cup of diced, cooked meat or cracklings to the mixture and to substitute bread crumbs or matzo meal for the flour. Still another interesting variation is to serve potato cupcakes. Simply place the mixture in well-greased custard cups and bake in a moderate (350 degrees) oven for 40 minutes.

One final version of the basic latke recipe is potato kugel (baked pudding). This time, make the basic potato pancake recipe and bake it in a shallow greased casserole dish

in a 350 degree oven about 40 minutes, or until brown.

To assure fool-proof potato latkes or kugel, start with the finest ingredients. When selecting potatoes, for example, experts in the Fruit and Vegetable Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service suggest you look for well-shaped, firm potatoes free from blemishes, sunburn (a

Fruit Salad, Too

WHETHER IT'S BEFORE, during, or after Christmas dinner, fruits—fresh, canned, dried, or frozen—make a colorful and tasty addition to holiday fare.

Long before the Christmas feast graces the table, you've probably stuffed yourself with the goodies that always seem to make an appearance around Christmas time.

Apples and oranges are found in stockings hung up the night before. Peach turnovers or a coffeecake chock-full of cherries and raisins just hits the spot Christmas morning.

"Don't spoil your appetite!" is the familiar cry, but then you snatch a piece of date roll when no one is looking.

It's obvious your appetite isn't spoiled by the time Christmas dinner is *finally* ready. Just look at that steaming ham glazed with pineapple and cherries. But who wouldn't have room for a Waldorf salad, ambrosia, or fruit and gelatin mold? And there's always cranberry sauce, or hot fruit cocktail, or spiced peaches.

After you've popped in the last bite of roll drenched in strawberry jam, it happens. No room for the pie!

Tossing all precaution to the wind, down goes the pumpkin, mince meat, cherry, or apple pie.

If you're the cook Christmas day—or any other day, for that matter—you may appreciate some advice on the quality of fruits from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service.

Many canned and frozen fruits are packed according to levels of quality (grades) developed by C&MS' Fruit and Vegetable Division.

Grade A or Fancy fruits are the very best, with excellent color and

green discoloration under the skin), and decay. Avoid potatoes with large cuts or bruises.

When selecting onions for your kugel or latkes, look for hard or firm onions. They should be dry and have small necks. The onions should also be covered with papery outer scales and be reasonably free from green sunburn spots, and other blemishes. □

appearance and uniform size, weight, and shape. They are excellent for use in fruit salads, ambrosia, or other dishes where you want fruits that are tasty and good-looking too.

Grade B or Choice fruits are full-flavored and of very good quality. They're perfect for use in coffee cake, gelatin molds, fruit cocktail, and pie filling.

Grade C or Standard fruits may contain some broken or uneven pieces. While they may not be as sweet as Grades A or B, they're good and wholesome and are often a thrifty buy. They can be used in puddings, jellies, and turnovers.

Many processors and distributors use the continuous inspection service of the Fruit and Vegetable Division to have the quality of the fruits they pack certified. The U.S. grade name or USDA grade shield may be shown on the label of canned or frozen fruits that have been packed under continuous USDA inspection.

USDA grades and inspection are also used for such products as jams, jellies, cranberry sauce, raisins, and other dried fruits. However, the grade name does not often appear on dried fruit containers. When buying dried fruit, look for fruits that are plump with a bright color.

Many fresh fruits are also certified for quality by the Federal or Federal-State Inspection Service, but the grade is not often seen on fresh fruits in retail stores. To help you select fresh fruits, C&MS offers the booklet, "How to Buy Fresh Fruits," G-141. To get your copy, send a postcard to Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Please use your ZIP code. □

Say "Cheese"

THE DISCOVERY OF THE FIRST cheese is a tale as steeped in legend as the mythical old Saint Nick himself!

At one time, it is said, an Arabian merchant setting out on a day's journey across the desert poured his milk supply into a pouch made of a sheep's stomach. While he was traveling, the rennet (now commonly used in cheesemaking) in the lining of the pouch was activated by the heat of the sun and caused the milk to separate. The result — curds and whey! That night, when the merchant stopped to drink, he found that the whey quenched his thirst and the cheese or curd not only satisfied his hunger but also brought a lively new flavor to desert fare.

Cheese was made and eaten in Biblical times more than 4,000 years ago. Asian travelers brought it to Europe, where for years the art of cheesemaking remained a guarded secret passed from father to son.

In 1620 those sons and grandsons brought the secret with them to America on the Mayflower. More than two centuries later, in 1851, Jesse Williams built the first Cheddar cheese factory in Oneida County, New York.

Now you can choose from both process cheese (a blend of fresh and aged natural cheeses) and more than 400 varieties of natural cheese. Both concentrate the protein, riboflavin, calcium and additional minerals and vitamins of milk into a small, healthy package. Not only will you whet your family's appetite with a highly nutritious food, but in serving cheese you will grace your holiday dining with color, international flavor and sophistication.

Although the popular cheeses described below are now produced in the United States and are locally available, a hint of old Europe still lingers in their traditional names.

If you have a sense of the historical, for instance, you might try *Gorgonzola*, a marbled cheese that originated in Italy's Po Valley in the ninth century. Try crumbling *Gorgonzola* in salad—you'll accent its already tangy flavor! □

Any taste adventurers in your family? Why not serve them the less familiar but pleasantly creamy *Port du Salut*? For years the Trappist monks kept the process for *Port du Salut* locked behind abbey walls, but you can now enjoy America's version of this European delight in mellow to robust flavors.

Blue cheese, mottled with blue-green veins, tangy and aromatic, is a zesty descendant of the French *Roquefort* family. Often crumbly, Blue cheese can be served as a spread or with fruit and crackers.

Camembert, another cheese of French origin, is popular with salad and an all-time favorite with fruit and crackers. It pays off in a real taste treat if you soften Camembert at room temperature to fully develop its fluid-like texture. Its thin, whitish crust is also edible.

Today, the United States produces 900 million pounds of *Cheddar* cheese a year. Cheddar's flavor varies with the degree of aging or curing—it may be mild, mellow or sharp. The Dairy Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service has developed grades of quality for Cheddar cheese, and cheese that has been officially inspected and graded may carry the USDA grade shield. U.S. grade AA or grade A cheeses are of the finest quality.

Somewhere between Cheddar and German *Limburger* is America's own discovery—*Brick* cheese—neither as sharp as the one nor as strong as the other. Mild, pungent, and sweet, Brick has a creamy white interior and semisoft to firm texture. And it doesn't crumble when sliced. Try it with crackers!

For information on buying, storing and serving these and other cheeses, write (by postcard) for "How to Buy Cheddar Cheese," G-128, and "Cheese Buying Guide for Consumers," MB-17. Single copies are available from the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Please include your ZIP code. □

Don't Forget the Peas!



LET'S SEE . . . MASHED POTATOES, gravy, dressing, rolls, butter, salt and pepper, cranberry sauce, olives, stuffed celery, salad, candied sweetpotatoes, creamed onions . . . and the turkey is half-carved. Everything's ready for Christmas dinner. You give a sigh of relief and sit down . . . and then you remember. You forgot the peas!

Don't feel alone, because grandmothers, mothers, mothers-in-law, aunts, sisters, nieces, Christmas hostesses and hosts all over the country are probably forgetting something too. It's usually a vegetable because so many are served with holiday meals.

Sweetpotatoes in one form or another—candied, whipped with marshmallow topping, boiled or baked—seem to be a favorite everywhere. Mashed white potatoes are usual in many parts of the country, but Californians might served baked potatoes, Alabamians, scalloped potatoes, and others, boiled parsleyed potatoes.

A green vegetable is a must. Green peas or green beans—buttered, with almonds or mushrooms—top the list, but in Texas and Wyoming, you may get asparagus, and in North Carolina and other southern states, collard, turnip, or other greens.

Fourth and even fifth vegetables served are: squash, turnips, corn pudding, corn-on-the-cob, or plain corn, artichokes, brussels sprouts, cauliflower, candied or buttered carrots, lima or butter beans, or creamed onions.

For this very special meal, you want to be sure the vegetables you serve are the tastiest you can get. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service has prepared two booklets that can help you choose vegetables: "How to Buy Fresh Vegetables," G-143, and "How to Buy Canned and Frozen Vegetables," G-167.

You may find the U.S. grade name or grade shield—U.S. Grade A or Fancy is top quality—on canned and frozen vegetables that have been packed under continuous USDA inspection. Many processors and dis-

tributors pack vegetables according to the levels of quality (grades) developed by the C&MS Fruit and Vegetable Division and also pay a fee to have the quality of their products officially certified by USDA inspectors. The grade is not always shown on canned and frozen vegetables, but you can learn more about quality with the help of the pamphlet.

Many fresh vegetables are also

packed according to U.S. grades and officially certified by Federal-State inspectors, but the grade is not often seen on vegetables in retail stores. "How to Buy Fresh Vegetables" gives tips on what to look for in good-quality fresh vegetables.

Send a postcard to Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250, for single copies of the vegetable pamphlets. Please use your ZIP code. □

Make Mine Rare



SPENDING LESS TIME with your family and friends and more time in the kitchen during the holidays? Then try a beef rib roast this year. This elegant-looking, all-American entree highlights any festive occasion and it is simple to select, prepare, and carve.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service offers these tips on selecting a rib roast:

- Always look for the USDA quality grade shield. For maximum tenderness, juiciness, and flavor, select USDA Prime or Choice.

- Buy the roast at least two ribs thick for proper cooking, and be sure to figure on at least one-half pound per person. For holiday meals, you may wish to allow a pound per person—especially if the roast is not boneless.

- Choose carefully. The boneless ribeye cut is practically wastefree, but there is considerable waste (bone and fat) in both the 5-inch and 7-inch cuts. This makes it difficult to compare prices per pound. However, since the thick ribeye section is the important part of this roast, a general guide to follow in deciding which type of cut is the best buy is this:

First, decide the thickness you prefer for each serving.

Next, determine how thick a roast you will need for the number of persons you are planning to serve. (Remember that a roast will shrink slightly during cooking.)

Then, select the style of cut—5-inch, 7-inch, or boneless ribeye—that will give you the number of servings you want for the least total cost.

Meanwhile, back in the kitchen . . .

Modern roasting calls for a constant low to moderate oven temperature of 325 degrees F. for beef rib roasts—no searing of the meat. An open roasting pan is used and no water is added. Then, to insure the beef will be just the way you like—rare, medium, or well-done—use a meat thermometer.

The thermometer will guarantee the degree of doneness you prefer. However, internal temperature of the roast will rise at least 5 degrees after it is removed from the oven, during the period it "sets" for carving. During this period (15 to 20 minutes) the meat should rest on a heated platter. Therefore, if you wish a "rare" roast, remove it from the oven when the thermometer registers an internal temperature of 135 degrees—then it should rise to 140 degrees before it is carved.

You may want to decorate the serving platter with one of your favorite garnishes—such as canned peaches or spiced plums—or to serve the meat with a sauce, such as a creamy horseradish sauce.

You can obtain a single copy of "How to Buy Beef Roasts," Home and Garden Bulletin No. 146, by sending a postcard to the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Please use your ZIP code. □

How to Buy a CHRISTMAS TREE



By Charles C. Littleton

SHOPPING FOR A CHRISTMAS tree always seems exciting. First, you decide where you're going to put the tree and what size it should be. Will a tall, stately fir look good in the living room or should you get a shorter, fuller tree like pine and put it in the family room? Choose the spot carefully, because a Christmas tree shouldn't be near a fireplace, radiator, television set, or other source of heat. Then with the perfect spot picked out and the size of the tree figured, you can decide about the kind of tree you want.

Scotch pine, a fast-growing tree that holds up well through the holiday season, is about the most popular Christmas tree. Most varieties of Scotch pine have bushy branches and

long needles (up to 3 inches) like most other pine trees. Douglas fir, which has short, soft needles that are attached all around the twig, is second on the list of favorites. Balsam fir has short, rather rounded needles and twigs that grow at right angles to the branches so they look like crosses. Eastern redcedar, a relative of the juniper tree, looks graceful and feathery, with its small, scale-like leaves. Red or Norway pine, with slender needles 5 to 6 inches long, is the fifth favorite Christmas tree. The symmetrical spruce trees, with their short, rather stiff needles, are also popular in many areas.

Whichever kind of tree you choose, your next decision is probably when to buy it. Specialists with the U.S. Department of Agriculture say your Christmas tree will probably keep fresher longer if you buy it early and keep it in water, even if you don't want to decorate it right away.

Now for the big decision on the Christmas tree lot! Which tree looks best? USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service has developed U.S. grades for Christmas trees, as for most other agricultural products, that describe different levels of quality. The grades for Christmas trees—U.S. Premium (top quality), U.S. No. 1, and U.S. No. 2—are based on shape, density, freshness, and cleanness and on absence of defects. While the grades are used mainly in wholesale trading, you may sometimes find trees tagged with the U.S. grade.

But if you don't, here are some things to keep in mind when you select your tree:

- To be sure it's fresh, rap the base of the tree on the ground. If many needles drop off, the tree is too dry.

- Look over the tree in an open space with good lighting (daylight if possible) so you can check its shape. Consider that the tree has four faces or sides. You will probably want at least three of the sides to be symmetrical, unless you plan to set up the tree in a corner and you can place two less shapely sides against the walls.

- Don't forget to look for crooks in the trunk or large bare spaces between branches.

- If you use a star or angel on top of the tree, you'll want to be sure to have a strong single leader at the top.

- If you do buy a tree with minor defects, such as a slightly crooked trunk, it should be a little cheaper than the more perfect trees.

When you get the tree home, saw about one-half inch off the bottom so it will absorb water. If you buy the tree early, keep it in a bucket of water in a cool, shady place, preferably outside, and saw another half-inch off the butt when you put the tree in a stand. Use a stand that holds water and keep water in the stand all the time the tree is up.

You'll have a tree you'll enjoy throughout the holidays if you choose it carefully and keep it fresh.

The author is a marketing specialist, Fresh Products Standardization and Inspection Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, C&MS, USDA.

Meals on Wheels



WITH CHRISTMAS UPON US, most of us are thinking of children's laughter, turkey roasts, and shiny baubles to trim our trees, but who is thinking of the old and the ill?

Meals on Wheels groups throughout the Nation are preparing warm holiday meals for thousands of shut-ins and disabled senior citizens. Care of the Nation's elderly is always a dilemma, but now putting meals on

wheels brings nutritive meals, often prepared from Government-donated foods, to many of America's aged.

Inspired by a similar program in England, more than 80 Meals on Wheels groups operate in the United States.

The objective of the program is to feed elderly people who cannot prepare their own meals. Meals are delivered door-to-door by car or by truck. While not a poverty program per se, Meals on Wheels reaches the poor and the ill. Those who cannot pay the small fees are provided free meals.

IN NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Nashville Meals on Wheels workers are planning a Christmas celebration much like last year's. A traditional Christmas dinner will be served at the church. There will probably be some carol singing, gift exchanging, and a Christmas card for each of the elderly people able to attend the party.

In Nashville, six days a week, two meals — one hot, one cold — costing about 75 cents each, are cooked and delivered to 21 senior citizens. In addition, once a week, a bag of fresh fruits is delivered to each.

"We try to prepare the food of their choice," said Mrs. Henri Dixon of Gordon Memorial Church. Meals on Wheels gives particular attention to the type of diet needed by the recipients, as well as their likes and dislikes. Nutrition being important, the dietitian plans special menus for those who need special diets. Meals are then packed in color-coded plastic containers to distinguish among them.

A nutrition student from Tennessee A&I plans meals for the project with the help of the State School Lunch Division. A State School Lunch supervisor picks among them for menus adaptable to the small-scale feeding operation.

Like many nonprofit Meals on Wheels projects, this program finds it worthwhile to participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service's Donated Foods Program. Many foods used are USDA-donated, and the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare pays 75% of the cost, with the remainder being paid

by the church.

IN JERSEY CITY

The Jersey City Meals on Wheels group is unique in that the Jersey City Housing Authority provides it with free kitchen space, equipment, and utilities in one of its projects. Other groups operate out of churches, club houses, hospitals, and community centers.

Jersey City Meals on Wheels started in June 1967 as a 16-week pilot program of the city's Community Action Neighborhood Development Organization, (Can Do), funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity. Today the group relies on Can Do and private donations for financial backing.

Fifty to 70 people between the ages of 60 and 94 eat meals through the program 5 days a week. A typical meal might be chicken, baked potato, peas, bread and butter, rice pudding and tea. On Fridays a heavy soup is sent along to serve as an extra meal on weekends.

IN PITTSBURGH

The Lutheran Service Society of Western Pennsylvania formed Meals on Wheels in Pittsburgh in November 1968. Operating from a local church, 50 volunteers prepare meals for about 30 northside Pittsburgh residents.

Volunteers deliver these meals, one hot and one cold, five days a week at a maximum charge of \$7.50 a week. Most clients pay about \$5.00 and some pay nothing.

A cold meal might include grapefruit juice, a bologna sandwich, a whole orange, a cinnamon bun and coffee, tea or milk.

IN NEW YORK CITY

The New York State Office for the Aging gave Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center a 3-year grant to establish a Meals on Wheels program. Meals on Wheels operates out of this center located in the Yorkville section of New York City.

This service is similar to that in Pittsburgh, but Mrs. Mary Cannata, director of the program, a cook, and two volunteers prepare meals for both home delivery and for serving in the center's cafeteria. About 60 neighborhood elderly people eat hot lunches at the center for 75 cents each. □



Watch How You Handle That Bird

By Sara A. Beck

AS EVERY HOUSEWIFE realizes, there's a lot to think about in making that holiday meal a happy and festive occasion. But by following a few simple steps—all covered in a new publication, "Meat and Poultry—Care Tips for You"—the housewife can be sure that when her family and guests gather around the table, the meat or poultry they eat is safe and wholesome.

As a starting point, she should know that the Federal inspection seal is her assurance that the meat or poultry came from healthy animals and was inspected throughout the packing operation. But the inspection mark is only assurance of wholesomeness when the meat or poultry leaves the packing plant.

So the prudent housewife will buy her holiday roast, turkey or goose in a store with a well-kept storage or display case. She'll be sure that the package isn't torn or damaged and that a frozen item is hard-frozen when it's purchased. The housewife will also be sure that the meat or poultry she buys is taken home and refrigerated quickly.

There are additional guidelines for frozen meat and poultry once they have arrived in the home. If it's going to be used within a few days, the meat or poultry may be stored in the coldest part of the refrigerator in its store wrappings. If it's to be frozen, the meat or poultry should

be tightly wrapped in moisture-resistant material such as aluminum foil or freezer paper.

Until the holiday or cooking day arrives, the food should be kept refrigerated. Ideally, frozen meat or poultry should be defrosted in the refrigerator. Meat or poultry may also be defrosted in a container of cold water if left in its water-tight wrapper.

Careful thawing procedures are especially important for poultry. If the bird must be thawed at room temperature, its surface should be

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kept cool during thawing. This can be done by placing the bird, still in its original wrapper, in a closed double-paper bag until it is pliable.

It is also important, especially with poultry, that surfaces such as knives or pans which contacted the raw product not come in contact with the product after it has been cooked. For this reason, soap and water or a cleanser which kills bacteria should be used on surfaces on which the raw meat or poultry was prepared. Utensils and other surfaces which contacted the raw product should also be sanitized thoroughly before contacting the cooked product.

The actual cooking of the meat

or poultry should not be taken lightly. Poultry especially should be cooked completely at one time and it should never be left partially cooked to be finished later. It's safest to cook dressing outside the bird. But if you do want to cook the dressing inside the bird, stuff it just before roasting.

The internal temperature of the roast or bird is the proper test for sufficient cooking. Fresh beef should be cooked to a temperature of 140 (for rare) to 170 degrees (for well done). Turkey should be cooked to an internal temperature of 180 to 185 degrees. The stuffing inside the turkey should be brought to 165 degrees.

Leftover meat or poultry, the basis for those delicious holiday sandwiches, should also be given proper care. Leftovers should be covered tightly and refrigerated or frozen promptly. Whenever possible, large quantities should be put in several small containers rather than one large one in order to speed cooling. The meat or poultry, any stuffing, and the broth or gravy should be stored in the refrigerator in separate containers.

Single copies of this new publication, "Meat and Poultry—Care Tips for You," (G-174), can be obtained by postcard request to the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington D.C. 20250.

MAKE QUALITY CONTROL WORK FOR YOU

By Dale Dunham

DO YOU WORRY THAT YOUR processed products won't pass inspection? Do reworking costs concern you? If you answer "yes", perhaps quality control can help to solve your problems.

More than 200 meat and poultry processors are now monitoring their own products to make sure that they will meet Federal inspection requirements. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service sees this trend as beneficial.

C&MS's Processed Food Inspection Division is concerned with quality control in these plants only for compliance with Federal meat and poultry inspection regulations. With plants maintaining quality control (QC), Federal inspectors will be better able to concentrate on sanitation of facilities and wholesomeness of the product instead of having to check as often the contents of a product against what is pictured on the package.

Quality control can lead the way to a more uniform product for consumers and higher levels of operating efficiency for processors.

There are many simple programs available that can be instituted without a complete understanding of statistics. For example, by weighing a few filled cans periodically during the operation and subtracting the weight of the can from each—you can constantly monitor your output, make an adjustment when needed, and not have any trouble with net weight regulations. By opening several frozen dinners or

pot pies periodically and determining the meat ingredient portion, you can avoid consumer complaints as well as conflict with standards.

After evaluating the effect of some preliminary programs such as these for net weight or meat ingredient weight, the producer can balance his return against the possible reworking of the product. If there is no check until after the lot is completed, and the Federal inspector finds the product out of compliance, the entire lot may have to be reworked. However, with a properly run QC system, the packer doesn't have to worry about his product being detained because he is sure his lots will meet regulations. He will be sure the product is correct because his own staff is making continual checks on it during the processing stages.

Under Federal meat and poultry inspection regulations, food inspectors check a representative sample of the finished product for net weight, additives, and accuracy of label information, besides a complete inspection for sanitation and wholesomeness.

This sample system of inspection has two major drawbacks. Sample inspection of completed lots can't readily detect deviations during processing which could ultimately make some of the finished product unacceptable. And immediate correction during processing isn't allowed for. A lot could contain both acceptable and unacceptable products and be judged totally unacceptable because of the difficulty in

separating the two.

However, if a processor fully implements a quality control system, these problems can be overcome. Another benefit of using QC is that control charts, on display for production personnel, plot inspection results and graphically provide an incentive for employees to compete and improve.

When management maintains and uses acceptable QC procedures, the job of determining compliance with regulations is left to the plant and only monitored by the Federal inspector. Before this type of inspection can be done by plant personnel, C&MS must first approve the system. Plants are required to submit answers to a questionnaire stating, for example, how many people will be used for QC work and exactly what the plant's proposed procedure will be. The overwhelming majority of the 200 approved plants are pleased with this program.

To further aid in cooperative programs of quality control, C&MS is encouraging development of plant QC systems by providing criteria for as many controls as practical.

If you want more information on quality control for your plant, the first step is to give an outline of the proposed system to Processed Food Inspection Division, Consumer and Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. □

The author is a staff officer, Planning Branch, Processed Food Inspection Division, C&MS, USDA.

Got a Marketing Problem?

Try solving it with a marketing research and development program.

CAN YOU PERSUADE people to love an onion?

Do the Japanese have a yen for dates?

Can the olive be cured?

These questions and many others have been asked—and answered—by marketing order research and development projects. These projects are conducted under the provisions of Federal marketing orders for various agricultural commodities which are set up by producers and handlers in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

When producer groups operating under Federal marketing orders, have a problem they believe can be solved through marketing research, they check with specialists in USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service to determine if it is authorized under the law which provides for marketing orders.

After approval from USDA, marketing research and development programs can proceed.

For instance, Texas onion growers wanted to adopt a promotional program, but they didn't know whether it would be effective.

In order to find out, the South Texas Onion Committee, which locally administers the marketing order program, got together with an advertising agency and a research team from Texas A&M University.

The advertising firm developed point-of-purchase promotional material and placed it in stores in several cities.

Then the research team took over. They selected another group of stores with similar business volumes which had no sales promotion and compared their sales of onions with the sales in stores with the

special material.

The tests showed that sales of a staple commodity, such as onions, can be increased through promotion—especially on a short-run basis. But the tests also indicated that the cost of promotion could exceed returns unless care is used in selecting the type of promotion programs.

A different problem confronted the California date industry. Each year they were producing more dates than they could sell. If they could open an export market, the economic condition of the date industry could be vastly improved.

It was found that Japan was an excellent export market for other fruits, but few dates were used there.

The manager of the date marketing order program went to Japan to survey the market. The preliminary survey showed that a good potential market existed, but that a strong promotional program would be necessary because dates were nearly unknown in Japan.

The survey included meetings with baking and confectionery industry groups, press representatives, and government officials in five large Japanese cities.

The initial meetings were followed by demonstrations showing the proper use of dates in baking. More than a thousand people, representing a large segment of Japan's baking and confectionery trade, attended the demonstrations.

Booklets of date recipes printed in Japanese were also prepared and widely distributed.

An evaluation of the promotion activity showed that the program had created some interest in the use of dates, but additional effort

was needed to develop large-volume sales. More date sales to Japan probably could be realized, the study indicated, by shifting to retail outlets where the Japanese could get acquainted with dates.

The olive industry was faced with changing an age-old process.

Juicy, black, ripe olives have always been stored in wooden barrels in salt brine to fully develop their distinctive flavor.

Recently this process was dealt a severe blow. A California water pollution control board decreed that the brine solution, which was dumped into streams when the storage cycle was completed, was polluting the water and had to be stopped.

The Olive Administrative Committee engaged a research team from the University of California to develop a new process for storing ripe olives without using salt solutions.

After two years of research, the team discovered that a benzoic acid solution could be used quite successfully and preliminary tests showed that the benzoic acid could later be removed from the water through the use of filters.

Now in its third year, the research is expanding to a commercial scale. Research also will continue to determine if there is microbial resistance to benzoic acid in storage solutions under air-tight conditions. Further research will be done to find other acceptable preservatives for olives in salt-free storage solutions.

There have been some beneficial side effects to the new processes for storing olives. In one type of olive, the flavor has improved. And in two varieties, the amount of shrinkage has been reduced.

It would have been nearly impossible for any individual farmer or producer to solve these problems or the many others that arise in marketing agricultural commodities. But, by joining forces under a marketing order program, their combined efforts can help to find solutions to marketing problems through marketing research and development programs.

needy put macaroni on trial

By J. R. Idol

"YOU BE THE JUDGE and jury." Needy persons in four boroughs of New York City (Bronx, Queens, Staten Island, and Manhattan), in St. Louis County, Missouri, and San Diego County, California, have been asked by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to participate in a special program which will enable them to serve as judge and jury of enriched macaroni.

Under the test program, now underway, needy persons in these areas will judge the acceptability of macaroni made from wheat and soy flours and milk macaroni made from wheat flour and milk products. Their acceptance will help determine whether enriched macaroni will be distributed, in addition to other cereal products, in the needy family program in the future. The areas selected for this test project are representative of the various sections of the country participating in the Commodity Distribution Program of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service.

The purpose of the test program for enriched wheat-soy macaroni and milk macaroni is basically twofold:

- To give recipients of USDA-donated foods a chance to try a palatable product made from several commodities which, by themselves, are widely used.
- To determine if these products are acceptable, with special emphasis being placed on nutritive value, taste, and ease of preparation.

Although wheat-soy macaroni and milk macaroni have not been distributed in the past under the Commodity Distribution Program, enriched macaroni has been commercially available for some time. The military services, moreover, have been large-scale users of macaroni, distributing it to combat troops stationed around the world.

Although wheat-soy macaroni, which has a light honey color and milk macaroni, which has a lighter color, are both easy to prepare and tasty, final acceptance is up to the recipients. Both products are good sources of vitamins and minerals, enriched with thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, calcium, and iron. They are nutritious like other grain products distributed to needy persons, including enriched rolled oats, wheat, rice, grits, and cornmeal.

The task of testing macaroni—as well as the job of testing all grain products distributed by USDA to needy persons—is the responsibility of the Grain Division of USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service. Some of the tests for macaroni include checks for protein content, color, moisture, vitamin enrichment and how it cooks.

Actual distribution of the enriched macaroni is being handled through the FNS Commodity Distribution Program, in cooperation with State and local agencies. □

The author is Deputy Director, Commodity Distribution Division, FNS, USDA.

FOOD TIPS

—from USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service

They're grown in houses, cellars and caves. They have a cap, gills, and a stem. What are they? *Mushrooms*. The cap is the wide portion on top and the gills are the numerous rows of paper-thin tissue seen underneath the cap once it opens. Smart shoppers, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service, can be assured of good quality if they buy mushrooms of small or medium size, with caps that are closed or slightly open. Avoid mushrooms with wide-open caps, which may also be pitted or discolored. □

* * *

Cranberry sauce is practically a must during the holidays. If you're making your own favorite recipe for cranberry sauce, here are some tips from the Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service. Fresh *cranberries* differ considerably in size and color, but for the best quality, look for plump, firm berries with a good, bright color. Duller varieties should at least have some red color. Occasional soft, spongy or leaky berries should be sorted out before cooking because they may produce an off-flavor. □

Food For Us All

DO YOU KNOW . . .

- How to compare the cost of in-shell and shelled nuts?
- What a strip steak is? a chateaubriand?
- How much turkey is in a frozen turkey pie if it carries the USDA inspection mark?
- What the greenish color is that sometimes appears between the white and the yolk of hardboiled eggs?
- The difference between "white meat" tuna and "light meat" tuna?
- What the USDA grades mean for meat? eggs? poultry? fresh, canned, and frozen fruits and vegetables? dairy products?
- How to make a shopping list to save on buying food?
- How to prepare meals for a large group, such as a church supper?

You can find the answers to these and many, many more questions in "Food for Us All," the 1969 Yearbook of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

In this book, in simple, "how to do it" style, food specialists in USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service and Agricultural Research

Service share with consumers their vast store of knowledge on how to buy, store, and cook foods. Recipes are given, too.

The book abounds in money-saving ideas, such as the advice to consider buying fruit with only superficial blemishes which may be less expensive. For example, light brown coloration on grapefruit skin and lack of red color on apples or peaches do not detract from the good taste of the fruit.

In addition, several chapters describe the latest developments in food processing and packaging, how food gets from the farm to you—and what it costs to do the job.

And the book details USDA food programs—school lunch, food stamp, and food distribution—and the efforts that are being made through them to truly provide "Food for Us All."

Members of Congress have a limited number of copies of the book for free public distribution. Other copies of "Food for Us All," may be purchased for \$3.50 each from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. □

number of autos, trucks, tractors, combines and corn pickers.

Each farmer's responses will be confidential. The information acquired, minus names or clues to identification, will become a part of statistical totals published in State, county, and national groupings. □

Santa's Bag of Plentifuls

Santa's bag of plentiful offers the consumer good buys which include the following, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service reports: fresh pears, broiler-fryers, canned peaches, canned pears, fresh apples, potatoes and sweetpotatoes, canned tomatoes and tomato products, dry beans, split peas and lentils. □

Holiday School Lunches Get Nutritional Twist

SCHOOL LUNCHES during the holiday season will have a slightly different twist this year in 16 greater Washington, D.C., metropolitan schools which are taking part in a menu planning test aimed at assuring a more nutritious meal in schools participating in the National School Lunch Program.

These schools have been using a new concept for selecting some of the foods for school lunches during a three-month period which began in October and ends this month. The results of the menu planning test will serve as a basis for establishing new guides for planning lunches for use nationwide by schools in the National School Lunch Program, which is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service.

The 16 schools have been revising their approach to planning Type A lunches by putting more emphasis on the selection of certain key foods that will supply nutrients such as vitamin A, iron, vitamin B₆ and magnesium, that are sometimes short in lunches. One concept behind this menu planning test is to use foods that are important sources of these nutrients and that will enhance other foods in the lunch to help meet the nutritional goal.

Dr. Ruth M. Leverton, assistant deputy administrator of the Agricultural Research Service, explained the new concept by saying, "In principle, we are using key food sources of these nutrients in

MAIL IN YOUR 1969 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

FOR THE FIRST TIME in its history, the Census of Agriculture is to be conducted entirely by mail.

Questionnaires covering 1969's operations will be mailed out early in January of 1970. Farmers and ranchers are asked to fill them out and mail them back.

The census, conducted each five years, will determine the number and acreage of farms, the farmer's own estimate of the value of land and buildings, the amount of cropland harvested, acreage of irrigated land, acreage in major crops, the number of farm operators by age, the amount of time farm operators worked at off-farm jobs, and the

amounts to boost the nutritive value of each other and of other foods.”

Dr. Leverton added that emphasis in the menu planning test is being placed on the fruit and vegetable group and other foods that include significant sources of nutrients such as milk products, eggs, and enriched cereal products.

A classic example of the application of this principle is combining peas and carrots to significantly increase the content of vitamin A, iron and other nutrients, Dr. Leverton said.

Herbert D. Rorex, director of the School Lunch Division, also pointed

out that the test is another joint effort by local, State and Federal agencies participating in the lunch program to continuously improve the quality of the lunches served in schools.

Schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program agree to serve lunches that include foods specified in a Type A lunch pattern. These foods are milk, meat or meat alternates, vegetables, fruits or both, enriched or whole grain bread, butter or fortified margarine. The goal of the Type A lunch pattern is to provide one-third of the child's daily food needs. The Type

A pattern helps local school lunch managers in preparing their own menus to fulfill this nutritional goal.

Of the 16 schools, five schools are located in Maryland, seven in Virginia, and four in the District of Columbia. Two of the schools are non-profit private schools.

The 3-month test is being conducted in light of new nutritional recommendations by the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences, and findings from the USDA's nationwide study on the Type A lunch. □



OFFICIAL BUSINESS



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COVER STORY

Do you want that holiday meal to be perfect? For tips on selecting top quality food for your family and guests, read the special section starting on page 2.



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